

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **Crane Company Building**

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number **836 South Michigan Avenue**

____ Not for publication

city or town **Chicago**

____ vicinity

state **Illinois**

code **IL**

county **Cook**

code **031**

zip code **60605**

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this _____ nomination _____ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant _____ nationally _____ statewide _____ locally. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

Illinois Historic Preservation Agency _____
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property _____ meets _____ does not meet the National Register criteria. (_____ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

American Indian Tribe

Crane Company Building
Name of Property

Cook County, Illinois
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other (explain):	_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 sites
<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 structures
<input type="checkbox"/> 0 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 objects
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register **N/A**

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

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6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce/Trade/business

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation **Concrete**

Roof **Asphalt**

Walls **Brick**
Stone

other **Terra cotta**
Granite

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce
Industry
Invention

Period of Significance **1912 to 1951 (A)**
 1912 to 1931 (B)

Significant Dates **N/A**

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) **Crane, Richard Teller, Jr.; Crane, Richard Teller, Sr.; Crane, Charles R.**

Cultural Affiliation **N/A**

Architect/Builder **Holabird and Roche**

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property **less than one acre**

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	16	448170	4635390	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title **Daniel Bluestone, Director, Historic Preservation Program**
organization **University of Virginia** date **October 22, 2001**
street & number **P.O. Box 400122, Campbell Hall** telephone **434-924-6458**
city or town **Charlottesville** state **Virginia** zip code **22904-4122**

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:
Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

- Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name **888 South Michigan LLC, c/o Keith Giles**
street & number **1530 South State Street** telephone **312-949-1500**
city or town **Chicago** state **Illinois** zip code **60605**

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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CRANE COMPANY BUILDING

Constructed in 1912, Chicago's Crane Company Building is a twelve-story stone, brick, and terra cotta high-rise, embellished with Classical Revival details. Located at the northwest corner of South Michigan Avenue and East Ninth Street, in downtown Chicago, the building has a 40-foot front on Michigan Avenue and to the east overlooks Grant Park and Lake Michigan. In contrast to mid-block infill sites along Michigan Avenue, the Crane Company's relatively narrow rectangular-shaped corner site helped ensure excellent natural illumination for its unpartitioned, loft-style, office floors. Unlike most other Chicago turn-of-the-century corporate skyscrapers, the Crane Company Building was not divided into small offices for rental to private individuals or firms. The building's open loft-style floors were used exclusively for the executive and white-collar workforce coordinating the Crane Company's expansive industrial production of iron and brass valves, pipes, fittings, plumbing fixtures, boilers, and radiators. The 160-foot long side elevation, facing East Ninth Street, has exterior windows evenly spaced from the front to the back of the building. Built on an alley and initially overlooking lower buildings to the west, where there is now a parking lot, the 40-foot wide rear elevation is also lined with windows. The building shares a party wall to the north with the YWCA Hotel, constructed in 1894. Since the YWCA building is only seven stories, the Crane Company Building provides a notable peak in the Michigan Avenue street wall. Holabird & Roche designed the building with a tripartite organization common in other late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century skyscrapers. Incorporating the formal division of a classical column into base, shaft, and capital, Holabird & Roche varied the exterior materials and design to establish three primary, visually distinct exterior sections. The first three floors, enclosed in granite and limestone, serve as a base. The next eight floors form a uniform shaft, enclosed in brick, and the top floor, with its terra cotta panels and cornice, appeared like a capital.

The Crane Company Building's exterior is notable for its high degree of original integrity. The elevations are in an excellent state of preservation. The building's double-hung windows, with their simple one-over-one pane configuration, have been removed and are being replaced according to standards established by the Department of the Interior. Sections of the cymatium, the top element of the building's cornice, have been removed and are undergoing repair and restoration. Even with missing sections, the articulated dentil course and the areas where the cymatium is still in place makes the bold original cornice design readily apparent and easily appreciated.

A steel skeletal framing system supports the Crane Company Building. Using steel cage construction on the expensive downtown site reduced the amount of valuable land that would have been consumed if the building used load-bearing walls. Forty-foot wide girders spanned the width of the building between the steel columns lining the sidewalls. These girders made it possible to construct column-free interior spaces. Along the side wall, columns stand every twenty feet. These columns established the building's main structural bays but did not determine in any straightforward way the design of the building's facades. Indeed, over the previous twenty years, the Holabird & Roche firm had designed a wide variety of exteriors to enclose skeletal structures. Depending on the relationship

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CRANE COMPANY BUILDING

established in the building's wall plane between windows, spandrels, and piers, the building could assume a variety of tectonic expressions. In contrast to many contemporary skyscraper designs, the design for the Crane Company Building did not treat these elements in a way that emphasized the skyscraper's verticality.

Holabird & Roche's relatively neutral approach to verticality in the Crane Company Building is evident in the treatment of each of the three primary sections of the exterior. Each section, for example, is topped by a prominent projecting cornice, which emphatically bounds the floors below and balances their vertical rise. Compositional balance is also evident in the way in which these sections are linked. Enclosed in limestone and granite, the first and second floors are composed as a single design element; the limestone third floor works visually as part of the base but it also provides a transition to the middle section of the building. On the first two floors, the windows and spandrel panels are slightly recessed from the building's front plane. A line of colossal order, two story-high classical piers supports a continuous cornice above the second floor windows. These piers mark the structural columns at the building's corners and along the Ninth Street wall. The piers' massive granite bases rise approximately 5.5 feet from the ground and then give way to a more articulated upper section of limestone that terminates in a corbelled capital below the second floor cornice. The bases of the piers are the only place in the building's stone lower section where granite is used rather than limestone. A single recessed spandrel with a simple raised rectangular panel in the middle separates the first and the second floor of the Michigan Avenue façade. The projecting edges of the spandrel frame the windows below and provides a sill for the one above, on the second floor. The northern bay of the Michigan Avenue façade had a modest door opening framed simply by the adjacent corner pier and the spandrel above. The rest of the first was designed with large display window rising off of a limestone base. The top section of the display window had a three-part transom light. The original display window and door are no longer in place; however, the basic configuration of the openings and the framing piers and spandrel are still in place. Above the first-floor spandrel on the Michigan Avenue façade, four small stone piers separate the second story into five window openings.

The formal treatment of the Ninth Street elevation expands upon the motifs employed in the front elevation. The base is divided into eight bays, each framed by articulated limestone piers rising from their massive granite bases. The recessed spandrel between the first and the second floor support two minor piers that divide each second-floor bay into three windows. The first story in each bay is given over to an area for a large display window topped by a three-section transom light. The only variation in this pattern comes in the fifth bay west of Michigan Avenue, where the main entrance to the building is located. The door has a limestone pedimented frame, which extends over the spandrel area above. The frieze over the door has raised letters spelling "CRANE CO," flanked by raised rosettes and topped by a dentilled course. The doorframe is flanked by window openings. The original door

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recessed in this framed surround and many of the display windows have been removed, but the entrance and the window openings are evident and maintain their original integrity.

The rear façade has the broad outlines of the adjacent side façade. Colossal order granite and limestone corner piers visually support the second floor cornice. There is no limestone spandrel separating the first and the second floor on the rear façade. A simple wall made up of finished mottled red brick encloses the two-story space of the rear façade framed by the stone corner piers and cornice. Two first-floor loading doors, two small windows, and four second-floor windows with white terra cotta sills break the brick wall plane.

The building's third floor provides a zone of visual transition between the base and the shaft of the building. It incorporates the limestone material of the lower floors while adopting the distinctive fenestration pattern of the upper floors. The upper section of the Michigan Avenue façade has four windows on each floor separated by three piers and framed by the corner piers. On the third floor, a panel with a bas-relief urn covers each corner pier. The three wall piers each have a thin vertical foliated pattern in a recessed panel. A continuous secondary cornice projects from the wall above the third floor. The upper portion of the long side elevation has sixteen windows on each floor. The limestone piers between each window on the third floor have the same bas-relief urns that are found on corner piers. The secondary limestone cornice above the third floor on the front façade runs continuously across the entire side and rear elevations. On the rear elevation, unadorned brick panels fill the three piers between the four rear windows. The limestone corner piers are decorated with the urns found on the front and side elevation.

The shaft portion of the building extends from the fourth through the eleventh floors and is constructed of mottled red brick. Each floor in this zone is identical. On the front, side, and rear elevations the corner piers are composed as distinct terminal elements. This is done with corner quoins formed by projecting and receding brick courses. In between the corner piers, windows are the only element that break the flat, unarticulated wall plane. Each window is framed on either side by a line of projecting brick headers and topped by a projecting brick flat arch with a white terra cotta keystone. A white terra cotta sill projects from the wall plane at the bottom of each window. This section of the building has four windows in the front elevation, sixteen windows in the side elevation, and four windows in the rear elevation. The windows in the rear elevation are treated more simply than elsewhere; white terra cotta sill and lintels are the only elements that break the wall plane.

Above the eleventh floor, a continuous white terra cotta cornice projects from the wall and continues around the entire top of the building. On the twelfth story, the corner and intermediate piers on front and side elevations are enclosed in white terra cotta panels with foliated ornament and a central circular element that resembles a section of a Crane valve. These same panels cover the corner piers on

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the twelfth-floor rear elevation. On the rear elevation, the intermediate piers are red brick. A continuous dentiled cornice runs around all four sides of the building above the twelfth floor. The north wall of the building is a party wall. Where it projects about the roof of the adjacent building, it is a flat red brick wall broken by the terracotta cornice above the eleventh and twelfth story. Initially this wall was completely unfenestrated. At some point four windows were added to both the eleventh and twelfth floors and two windows each were placed on the ninth and tenth floors. These windows are simply cut into the wall, without decorative treatment. The flat roof is occupied by a one-story mechanical penthouse, measuring approximately 14 feet by 60 feet. This penthouse stands on the interior northern lot line and is set back 50 feet from the Michigan Avenue front.

The Crane Company Building's original interior was extremely simple. The main entrance on Ninth Street opened into a first floor exhibition room where Crane products were displayed. Two elevator cores and an enclosed stair with marble treads, metal balusters and risers, and a wooden handrail, are located on the building's northern party wall; they gave access to unpartitioned office space on the upper floors. This building's floors were extensively remodeled and subdivided after Crane vacated the building in 1959. The first floor exhibition space was remodeled and subdivided into separate stores. The wood paneling in the area of the second floor where the Board of Director's met and the paneling in the Treasurer's office were removed. The deterioration and destruction of the modest interior elements over the years was quite extensive. All interior floors and spaces are now in the process of rehabilitation for residential conversion. This conversion involves the partitioning of the floors into separate rooms and apartments. Nevertheless, the relative simplicity of the original building interior was such that character of the interior space is still obvious. The associational significance does not turn upon the details or configuration of the interior space; the interior served primarily as the exclusive domain of Crane employees and the fairly limited number of business associates who met with their counterparts in the building. The interior changes do not compromise the integrity or historical significance of the building. This is especially the case as the building relates to the associational character encompassed by National Register Criteria A and B. The Crane Company and its leaders were monuments in the broad industrial and social landscape of Chicago. The building's exterior and location nicely encompass this historical reality.

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Designed by the Chicago architectural firm of Holabird & Roche and constructed in 1912, Chicago's twelve-story Classical Revival style Crane Company Building served as the main office for the United States' leading manufacturer of iron and brass valves, pipes, fittings, plumbing fixtures, boilers, and radiators. Richard Teller Crane founded the company in Chicago in 1855. The Crane Company developed into a major industrial enterprise employing thousands of Chicago workers. Crane invented and manufactured products that significantly modernized domestic plumbing and heating systems, transformed the methods of industrial production, and contributed to changing the skyline of American cities. As a site associated with a company whose products literally shaped the broad patterns of our history and landscape, the Crane Company Building meets National Register Criterion A local significance in the areas of industry, commerce, and invention. In its relation to Richard Teller Crane (1832-1912), and two of his sons, Charles R. Crane (1858-1939), and Richard Teller Crane, Jr. (1873-1931), the building meets National Register Criterion B local significance, associated with the lives of persons significant in our past. The Crane Company was a manufacturing company that operated extensive iron and brass foundries and mills. Unfortunately, the years have taken a huge toll on Chicago sites associated with the company. All of Crane's Chicago manufacturing sites have either been demolished or substantially altered in a manner that compromises their historic and architectural integrity. All of the residences occupied by the leading members of the Crane family who directed the company have also been demolished. The Crane Company Building is the Chicago site associated with the business and the family that has the greatest integrity. The dates related to the Crane Company Building's Criterion A significance are 1912-1951; the terminal date corresponds with the National Register's fifty-year cut-off date. The significant dates relating to the Criterion B significance of the three Crane family members is 1912-1931; the terminal date corresponds to the year when the last of these three men left the presidency of the company. Although Richard Teller Crane, Sr. never worked in the Michigan Avenue building, its planning and construction directly stemmed from his leadership of the company.

In 1912, just at the time the Crane Company built its downtown office building, historian J. Seymour Currey reflected on the operation of the Crane Company in a way that captured its significance among Chicago business enterprises. He wrote:

What the name of Marshall Field & Company is to the dry goods trade and Swift and Armour to the packing industry of Chicago, so is the name of the Crane Company to the iron trade. A gigantic enterprise, furnishing employment to several thousand workmen, has been built up through the enterprise, business ability and capable management of Richard Teller Crane, who for a half century or more has been a resident of Chicago and a representative of its foundry interests.¹

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Indeed, Richard Teller Crane, who founded the Crane Company in 1855, stood out among Chicago's host of late-nineteenth-century self-made millionaire industrialists. He was born into a modest working-class family in Patterson, New Jersey in 1832. After only a few years of formal schooling, he started working full time at the age nine. His father died a few years later. Crane first worked in a cotton factory and later took employment in a brass and iron foundry in Brooklyn. Next he worked in New York City, manufacturing printing presses. When he lost his job during the economic panic of 1854, he moved to Chicago and, in 1855, he opened a brass and bell foundry in the lumberyard of his uncle, Martin Ryerson. In 1860 Crane opened an iron foundry that prospered during the Civil War. In 1864, he established a wrought-iron pipe mill and later added a malleable iron foundry and a machinery shop for manufacturing steam engines. By the late nineteenth century, Crane stood as national leader in the manufacture of valves, fittings, and pipe for carrying water, steam, and gas. The company employed thousands of employees and had a capital stock of seven million dollars.

Crane's early manufacturing promoted high quality pipes and fittings that could reliably hold high-pressure steam, gas, and water. These products and the company's steam engines had applications both in industrial production and in the modern plumbing, heating, and lighting systems that were being introduced into households throughout the United States. Crane's growing industrial works at the corner of Desplaines Avenue and Fulton Street and on North Jefferson Avenue between Randolph and Lake streets did not burn during the 1871 Chicago Fire. This meant that Crane was in an excellent position to provide the steam, water, and gas systems to new factories, buildings, and homes after the fire. In 1867, drawing upon the range of industrial goods already being manufactured by his company, Crane started the first company for manufacturing freight and passenger elevators in the West. Here again, the Crane Company was ideally positioned to provide a key product used in the rebuilding of the business district. Crane elevators operated in some of the most prominent buildings constructed in late nineteenth-century Chicago: the Auditorium Building, the Board of Trade, the Ashland Block, the Title & Trust Building, the Rand-McNally Building, and the Carson, Pirie, Scott and the Marshall Field Company stores. Henry H. Richardson's Marshall Field Warehouse also used Crane elevators. Crane elevators operated in the United States Capitol in Washington, the Ames Building in Boston, Louis Sullivan's Union Trust Building in St. Louis, and the Mills Building in San Francisco.² In 1895, in the midst of a national economic depression and a major downturn in building, Crane sold the elevator manufacturing operation to the Otis Elevator Company. Nevertheless, the company had already made a substantial contribution to the rise of modern skyscrapers and to changing the skyline of major American cities. With the sale, Crane focused anew on its core business of producing pipes, valves, fittings, boilers, and radiators.

The Crane Company's Michigan Avenue building occupied an important and complicated place in the history of the enterprise. Its significance turned in part upon its relation to the lives of the three Cranes who led the company between 1855 and 1931. A brief survey of both the company building program and elements of the vision of the first three Crane presidents will help contextualize this part of

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the company operation. Richard Teller Crane always prided himself upon his mechanical ability and inventiveness, which he claimed he inherited from his father, who had worked as a builder. He came to his position and success through the foundry, through the operations side of his business. He was known to spend an enormous amount of time on the floor of his foundries and machine workshops. In 1907 a profile of Crane published in the Chicago Tribune reported that, "this rugged, white-haired man of millions probably calls more of his thousands of men by their first names than any other employer on half the scale in Chicago. . . . [P]assing into his mills with an eye trained to discover the perfections and imperfections of both men and machinery, Richard Teller Crane clasps more soiled and sooty hands in friendly greeting than come to the hearts and consciences of most men."³ Crane was clearly comfortable and quite innovative with the mechanical and technological side of his business.

Crane's engagement with the men and machines in his foundries was reflected in how he positioned himself in the Crane plant. Even as the head of an enormous, sprawling industrial empire with huge plants at several locations in Chicago, and eventually in other cities as well, Crane never maintained a private office. From 1864 until 1905 the Crane Company offices were located on the first floor of the building at 10 North Jefferson Street, right in the midst of the foundry. In fact, a foundry operated on the floor directly over the main office. John Berryman, who joined the company in 1895, recalled the office in his memoir: "The offices had glass partitions so that you could see and be seen. . . . We were directly under the brass finishing shop and at frequent intervals somebody would dump a barrel full of castings on the floor above and bring down a cloud of dust, which had been accumulating since 1865. There was constant traffic through the entrance hall and a lot of noise. We became accustomed to dirt and noise after a while and paid no attention to it."⁴ There was no executive suite for Crane or his managers and the space below the foundry continued to serve as the company office even as the company expanded from a few hundred workers to several thousand. The building at 10 North Jefferson stands today as another key Chicago site related to the Crane Company history. However, the building's integrity has been somewhat compromised by the fact that it is only a fragment of the original plant and office complex. Seven other buildings on the site have been demolished, including a foundry, machine shop, castings shop, carpentry shop, valve department and related spaces. The historical significance of the Jefferson Street office relates in no small part to its juxtaposition with these other buildings that have since been removed.

In 1905 the office arrangements for the Crane Company changed. As Crane wrote in his autobiography, "the enormous expansion of our business during this period also caused a great increase in our office force, and to provide room for this portion of the work we erected in 1905 an office building."⁵ Despite creating a separate, specialized office building, Crane showed his continued preference for an office close to the site of production. The five-story building went up directly across the street from the company's massive new brass and iron foundry operation, constructed along Canal Street south of 12th Street. Elements of the earlier office were maintained. There were no partitions for

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private offices. Where Crane sat in one corner of the first floor, "there was no push button for summoning subordinates. There is no Cerberus guarding the doorway." Crane could look up and "see a hundred office men at their work."⁶ He shared the open floor with his sons, the vice presidents, all sales departments, the engineering department, the cost department and the traffic department. The treasurer and the auditing, credit, purchasing, metal buying, and plumbing departments occupied the second floor. The filling and ordering departments and the private telephone exchange occupied the third floor. The order copying and advertising departments took up the fourth floor. Space for a school for training salesmen filled the fifth floor.⁷

In location and interior arrangement, the 1905 office building matched aspects of the earlier office accommodations and allowed Crane's continued close supervision of manufacturing. Crane had commissioned Louis Sullivan to design the office building. Sullivan had also designed the brass foundry across the street. Crane undoubtedly admired Sullivan's office design, which was a simple unadorned brick building that was, in the words of historian Hugh Morrison, "absolutely devoid of ornament." The building did not have a cornice. The only variation in the brick façade came where the windows were punched through the wall and where every fifth course of bricks was laid up with all headers. There were no terra cotta panels of foliated Sullivanque ornament. This type of simple modern design undoubtedly appealed to Richard Teller Crane. Crane's daughter Frances wrote of her father that he "was a strong, able, honorable man, absorbed in his business, but also [in] his wife and anxious that his children should not be spoiled. He wanted us brought up with simplicity; we dressed simply and our food was extremely simple." Frances remembered looking forward to visiting friends where she might be served fancy cakes. In a letter written in 1908 to be read with his will, Crane wrote, "I hope that none of my family will get into what might be called an extravagant way of living, for I feel that such a course is disgusting and most decidedly wrong, and it is altogether too prevalent in this country." Moreover, he insisted that their charity be directed exclusively towards helping needy people in the "lower strata." He implored them to "never do anything in directions that I consider to be largely ornamental or artificial—such as higher education, higher music, or higher art." Sullivan's design for the office building and the building's location near the foundry clearly corresponded nicely with Crane's business and cultural sensibilities.⁸

Crane's apparent affinity for the simplicity in Sullivan's office design and his critique of higher education as "largely ornamental" were sentiments that his children and many other Americans were certainly familiar with. Crane, who had crusaded in favor of and helped fund practical vocational and manual education in the Chicago public schools, spent the last decade of his life in a protracted battle against American higher education. This crusade spread his national reputation far beyond the industrial realm. He insisted that he was not opposed to education, "but only to its useless and extravagant frills and fads." Higher education in his view was of questionable value in preparing students for life, particularly life in business and industry. He thought that most higher education was an expensive

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fraud. His own biography certainly confirmed him in his view that, “with very few exceptions the eminently successful men of this country have had a very small amount of schooling.”⁹ In 1909, Crane published his various reports and essays on higher education in a volume titled The Utility of All Kinds of Higher Schooling: An Investigation by R. T. Crane.¹⁰ Just before he died Crane summed up his findings: “The farther I go into this education question the more firmly am I convinced that I was right when I took the ground some time ago that this university, [the University of Illinois] and all others, ought to be burned down, and that money spent on them should be expended where it would do some good.”¹¹ In this context, Crane’s interest in maintaining the proximity of his office to the company’s industrial plants has a clear logic.

Given that logic, the Crane office’s move to Michigan Avenue, just seven years after the completion of the Sullivan-designed office building, appears quite remarkable. Many Chicago manufacturers in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century relocated their executive and white-collar workers from offices adjacent to their industrial plants to modern downtown skyscrapers. The move brought these workers into close proximity with other executives, with banks, insurance companies, lawyers, accountants, and the transportation and communication hubs that were an increasingly important part of modern business pursuits. It also removed executives and their white-collar workers from the polluted and often contested social terrain of the industrial plants, a landscape often gripped with labor tension and strikes. In the case of the Crane Company the transition from plant office to downtown precisely coincided with a generational change in the leadership of the company. On January 8, 1912 Richard Teller Crane died of a massive heart attack at his residence at 2541 Michigan Avenue. He was 79 years old. Three weeks later the business manager of the University of Chicago recommended to the University’s board of trustees that it accept a proposition from the Crane Company to lease property at the corner of South Michigan Avenue and East Ninth Street for the construction of a new main company office. The lease would run for thirty years, \$12,800 per annum for the first fifteen years and \$16,000 per annum for the second fifteen years. The trustees accepted the proposal and required that the company construct a building on the site worth \$100,000 within two years. There is no evidence to indicate whether Richard Teller Crane was involved in the decision to relocate the office downtown before he died. Neither the decision to relocate, nor the decision to lease land for the project from a noted institution of higher education would have been easy for him to reach.¹²

In a sense Richard Teller Crane’s family marked his death with two monuments in January, 1912. One monument was the tall obelisk supporting an allegorical female figure that marked Crane’s grave in the Oak Hill Cemetery in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. The second monument rose, with some irony, on the Michigan Avenue site leased from the University of Chicago, a new office building that separated the Crane office from the works for the first time in the company’s nearly six decades of operation. Whether Richard Teller Crane would have approved the move downtown or not, he was tied to the building because he had developed his company to such an extent that the movement of the main

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office now seemed prudent, a landmark to the growth, success, and diversification of the business. The Crane Company also had a powerful financial incentive for the move. In the wake of urban developments that flowed from the Commercial Club's 1909 Plan of Chicago, coordinated by architect Daniel H. Burnham, several rail lines began to focus on 12th Street as an important artery for the construction of new freight terminals. Both Sullivan's Crane Company office building and the entire Crane foundry operation across the street were soon purchased and demolished by railroad companies for terminal development. As the company's main office moved downtown, Crane spent \$600,000 for 160 acres of land located on South Kedzie Avenue between West Thirty-Ninth and West Forty-Third streets. With a half mile of frontage on South Kedzie Avenue, the company started a \$5,000,000 plant marked with a 175 foot high clock tower on the main building.¹³ For years this plant stood at the center of Crane Company production. Little of this massive plant survives. The railroads later purchased the site and demolished both plant and office buildings to make way for the Corwith Yard piggyback railroad freight terminal.

Richard Teller Crane left his company in the hands of two of his sons, Charles R. Crane and Richard Teller Crane, Jr. Known for his occasional temper, stubbornness, and somewhat autocratic style, Richard Teller Crane had from time to time disagreed about company policies with his sons, who served as Crane vice presidents. At one point in 1889 Charles Crane wrote to his sister that, "Father is on one of his tears and is knocking things right and left. It takes a great deal more time to run him than it does to run the business." Richard Teller Crane's daughter reported in her memoir that she once argued with her father about his harsh criticism of his sons' handling of company business. In anger Crane retorted that they "don't understand my business and they are not interested." The business side of Crane's relationship with his sons was fraught with tension as he worried that they would lose the company and the fortune that he had built. Crane continued to push his sons even at the end of his life. He left a letter with his will giving precise business instructions:

It is my desire that the family will continue the business as I have established it, and conduct it absolutely on the lines that I have laid down. The wisdom of this policy I think must be obvious to everyone. The great success that has been attained by the Crane Company certainly is conclusive proof that the policy I have followed in carrying on this business has been correct in every particular and no feature of it should ever be questioned for a moment. . . . Avoid speculators, schemers, etc.¹⁴

It is not clear whether the move to Michigan Avenue was "absolutely on the lines" of Richard Teller Crane's stewardship of the company. It certainly established a novel geographical relationship between the office and the plant. What is clear is that the move to Michigan Avenue was one of the first important business decisions concluded by the Crane sons after their father died. It redefined in rather

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important ways the historic relationship between the company executives and the industrial work performed by the company. Rather than having at hand, and on display, the actual manufacture of Crane products, the new office building incorporated a first-floor display space that exhibited the company's leading products.

Charles R. Crane, the older of the two sons left in charge of the company, served first as president of the company. He was directly in charge of building the new headquarters.¹⁵ Like his father, Charles had not completed secondary school or attended college. He had spent years working in various departments in the company. However, two years after becoming president, Charles and his brother Richard disagreed over the operation of the company and the "interpretation" of their father's instructions for continuing the business. They agreed that one should sell his share to the other. Paying more than \$10,000,000, Richard bought out his brother. This brought Richard Teller Crane, Jr., who held a degree from Yale University, to the head of the company. Despite his father's disdain for college, Richard Teller Crane, Jr. enjoyed tremendous success in directing the Crane Company. He served as president from 1914 until his death in 1931.

Richard Teller Crane Jr. did operate the company along the lines his father had established, but then, in the early 1920s, he made the decision to expand substantially the company's production of bathroom plumbing fixtures and trim, a manufactured line that had been associated with the Crane name since 1895. In 1921, Crane built a large plant in Chattanooga for its subsidiary, the Crane Enamelware Company. It also purchased an existing iron works company in Chattanooga. In 1922, Crane purchased an interest in the Trenton Potteries Company of Trenton, New Jersey and three years later acquired the entire company. Crane then embarked on a multi-faceted campaign to change the bathroom from a utilitarian space of mere convenience to a domestic space worthy of design expertise and consumer luxury and taste. Crane first called on eminent designers who "created fabulously attractive" custom-made bathrooms that the company hoped would fuel consumer desire for greater luxury in bathroom fixtures. Custom Crane bathrooms became the "talk of the nation." The new craze for luxury was crystallized by Hollywood, which in the 1920s recorded numerous movie scenes with lavish baths produced by Crane and featuring such stars as Gloria Swanson. The Crane Company began extensive research on the mass production of porcelain enamels and vitreous china finishes on bathroom fixtures. It hired the noted industrial designer Henry Dryfus to design Crane's mass-produced fixtures and began pouring over one million dollars a year into advertising and promoting Crane bathroom fixtures. One Crane Company historian surveyed this history and wrote:

One of the greatest contributions to good living of [the roaring twenties] was the modern bathroom—and Crane Co.'s pioneering work in the glamorizing of the bathroom is a high spot in the company's history. . . . Crane Co. is by no means the only manufacturer and distributor of modern plumbing fixtures but Crane Co. was the pioneer in risking capital

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and reputation to create the desire for glamour, luxury and modernity in the bathroom. . .
. [S]urveys show Crane plumbing is preferred by more people than any other.¹⁶

Richard Teller Crane, Sr. had built a company devoted in part to manufacturing the parts of plumbing systems that were behind the wall and in the street. Richard Teller Crane, Jr. expanded the company tremendously by focusing on the parts of the plumbing system in front of the wall, in the bathroom itself. Crane Jr.'s establishment of the company as a "style leader" in bathroom fixtures and his interest in selling glamour in bathrooms smacked, perhaps, of extravagance and ornament, things that Crane Sr. might well have found questionable or even objectionable. However, the company doubled in size under his direction. Even as the company opened plants and branch distributors around the United States and Canada, basic decisions about the direction of the company were made in the Crane headquarters on South Michigan Avenue. In 1943, John Berryman, a longtime Crane employee, wrote that the office building "is too narrow for a perfect layout and, at times, has been too small, but we have gone along quite well for [thirty] years."¹⁷ Berryman clearly thought that the office building overlooking Grant Park was far superior to the earlier office he had occupied with the foundry close at hand.

When Crane Jr. died in 1931, John Berryman became the first Crane Company president from outside the family. The Crane Company survived the depression with only three unprofitable years and continued to push forward along its established lines. By the 1950s the company had annual sales of over 300-million dollars and had nearly 25,000 employees. Nevertheless, in that decade some investors grew critical of the company's relatively low profits and its new expansions into mining and metallurgy. In 1957 Fortune reported that, "Crane's management has allowed a considerable portion of its plant and facilities to become obsolescent. Since World War II, moreover, Crane's policies have wavered and management seems to have lost its sense of direction."¹⁸ Crane's difficulties presented Thomas Melon Evans, a Pittsburgh financier, with an opportunity. He invested heavily in the company, lined up support among other investors, and took over the chairmanship of the company. Evans then began to transform the Crane Company operation dramatically. He fired several vice presidents. He drastically reduced the inventory of Crane's 40,000 products. He sharply cut production at the Chicago plant and laid off 700 of the plant's employees. He closed or sold a quarter of the company's branches. His moves created an immediate 300 per cent gain in net earnings. Evan's viewed the company as mired in its old ways, and to him the Chicago office symbolized a connection to the past. Part of transforming the company, its operation, and its image came when Evans closed the Chicago office and moved the headquarters to New York's Park Avenue in 1960. The company later moved its headquarters to Stamford, Connecticut.¹⁹

After Crane vacated the Michigan Avenue building, Standard Oil of Indiana expanded into the building from its office building across the street. In 1977 the building was auctioned off for \$490,000

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and used for private office rentals. The primary Chicago site that embodies Crane Company history, the building is now being preserved through residential conversion.

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- ¹ J. Seymour Currey, Chicago: Its History and Its Builders (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1912), 697.
- ² See catalogue, Crane Elevator Company, Builders of Passenger and Freight Elevators Operated by Hydraulic, Steam and Electric Power (Chicago: Crane Elevator Company, 1893).
- ³ Chicago Tribune, 9 June 1907.
- ⁴ John B. Berryman, An Old Man Looks Back. Reminiscences of Forty-Seven Years, 1895-1942, In the General Offices of Crane Co. (Chicago: Privately Printed, 1942), 2-3.
- ⁵ Richard Teller Crane, The Autobiography of Richard Teller Crane (Chicago: Crane Company, 1927), 80.
- ⁶ Chicago Tribune, 9 June 1907.
- ⁷ "New Office Building," Valve World, 1 (July, 1905).
- ⁸ Hugh Morrison, Louis Sullivan: Prophet of Modern Architecture (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1935), 202; Frances Crane Lillie, "The Story of My Life," unpublished manuscript in Crane Papers, Chicago Historical Society; Richard Teller Crane, Letter left with Crane Will, 6 January 1908, Crane Papers, Chicago Historical Society.
- ⁹ Richard Teller Crane, The Futility of Higher School (Chicago: 1911), 5, 7.
- ¹⁰ See Abigail Loomis and Franklin E. Court, "Richard Teller Crane's War with the Colleges," Chicago History, 11 (1982): 204-213.
- ¹¹ Chicago Tribune, 9 January 1912.
- ¹² University of Chicago Board of Trustees Minutes, 30 January 1912, 12 March 1912.
- ¹³ "Crane Plant to Cost \$5,000,000," Economist, 48 (23 November 1912): 873; "The New Crane Plant," Economist, 50 (25 October 1913): 706; "Crane Company's Offices on Michigan Boulevard," Economist, 47 (3 February 1912): 268.
- ¹⁴ For 1889 incident see Mary Prentice Lillie Barrows, "Drafts for C. R. Crane Biography," unpublished manuscript, Crane Papers, Chicago Historical Society. For tension over business with sons see Frances Crane Lillie, "The Story of My Life," unpublished manuscript in Crane Papers, Chicago Historical Society; Richard Teller Crane, Letter left with Crane Will, 6 January 1908, Crane Papers, Chicago Historical Society.
- ¹⁵ Berryman, Old Man, 46-48.
- ¹⁶ Crane Company, Centennial Story (Chicago: Crane Company, 1955), 23-25.
- ¹⁷ Berryman, Old Man, 47-48.
- ¹⁸ "The Crane Co.: Under Repair," Fortune (March, 1957): 127.
- ¹⁹ "The Storm That Rocked Crane Co.," Fortune (May, 1960), 143-145, 226, 228, 234, 238, 240; Chicago Tribune, 3 January 1960; "Personality: A Self-Confident Reorganizer," New York Times, 6 December 1959.

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Major Bibliographical References

Berryman, John B. An Old Man Looks Back. Reminiscences of Forty-Seven Years, 1895-1942, In the General Offices of Crane Co. (Chicago: Privately Printed, 1942).

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“Crane Company’s Offices on Michigan Boulevard.” Economist 47 (3 February 1912): 268.

Crane Family Papers. Chicago Historical Society.

Crane, Richard Teller. The Autobiography of Richard Teller Crane (Chicago: Crane Company, 1927).

Loomis, Abigail. and Franklin E. Court, “Richard Teller Crane’s War with the Colleges,” Chicago History, 11 (1982): 204-213.

“The Storm That Rocked Crane Co.” Fortune (May, 1960), 143-145, 226, 228, 234, 238, 240.

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10. Geographical Data, Continuation Sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Property encompasses the 40 foot by 160 foot lot at the northwest corner of South Michigan Avenue and East Ninth Street, 836 S. Michigan Avenue, Lot 9 in Block 17 of Chicago Fractional Section 15.

Boundary Justification

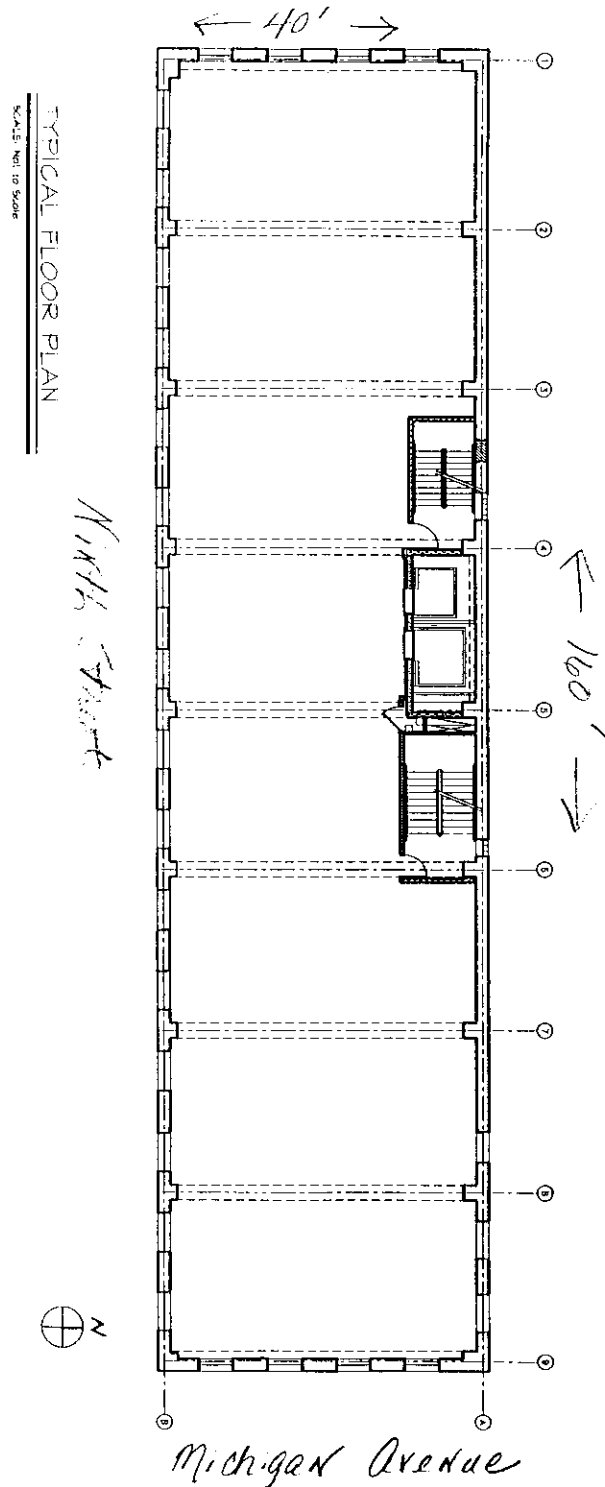
These boundaries were selected because they represent the entire lot upon which the Crane Company Building stands.

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CRANE COMPANY BUILDING

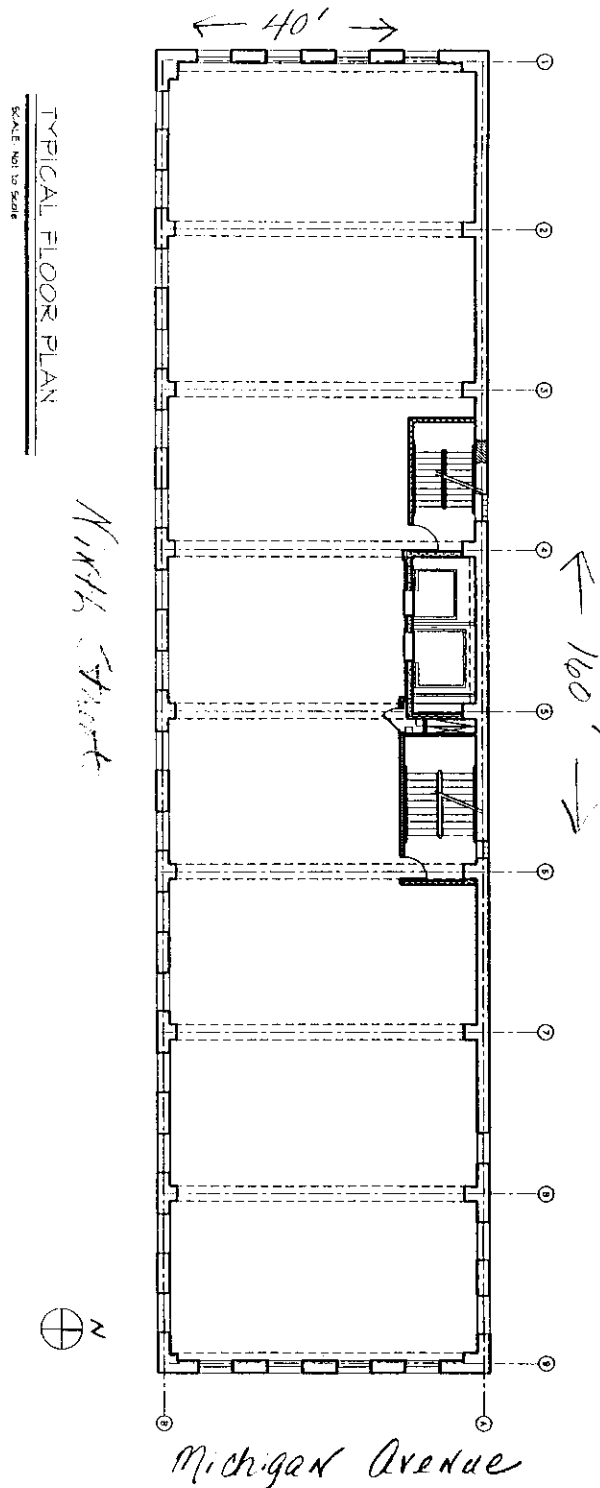


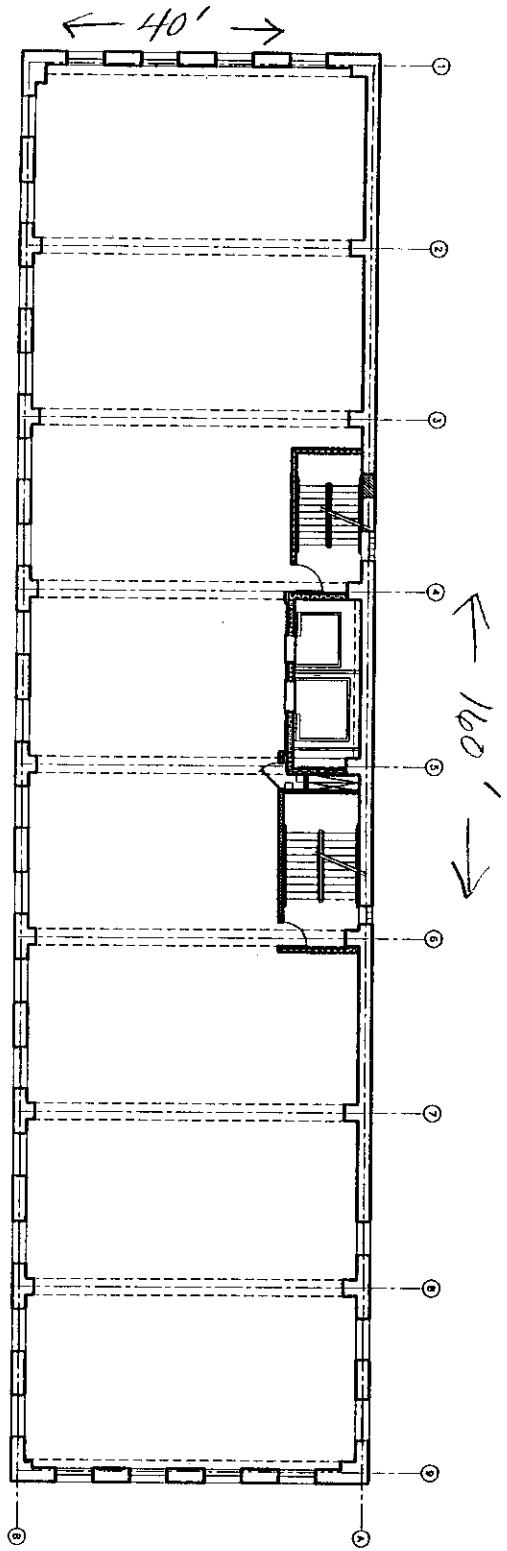
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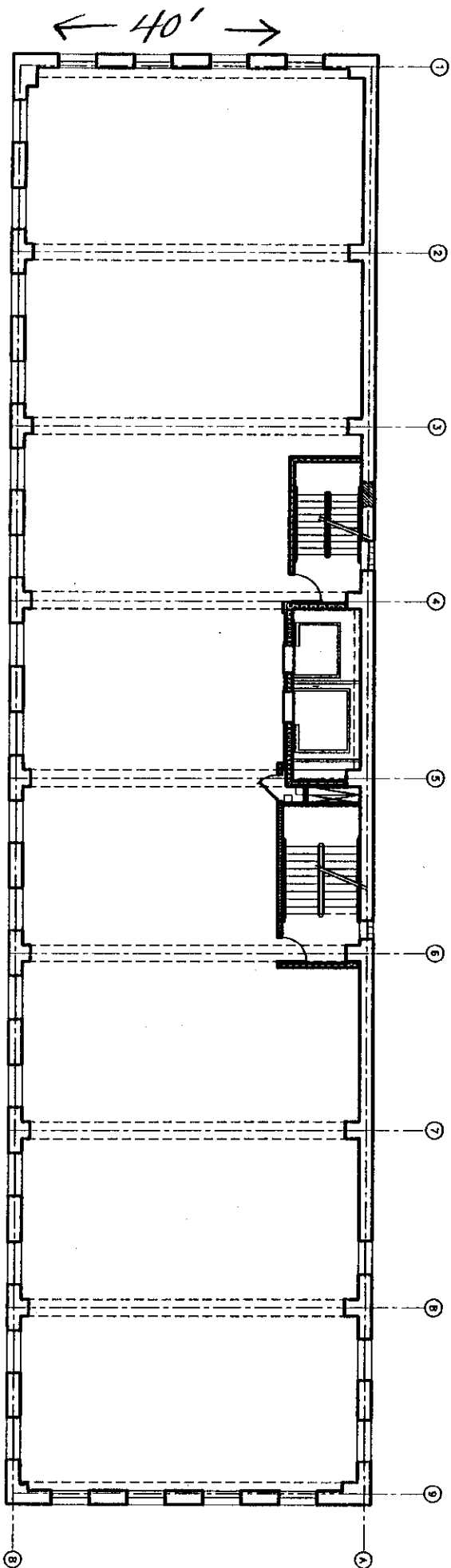


Michigan Avenue

Ninth Street

TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN
SCALE: NOT TO SCALE





← 40' →

← 160' →

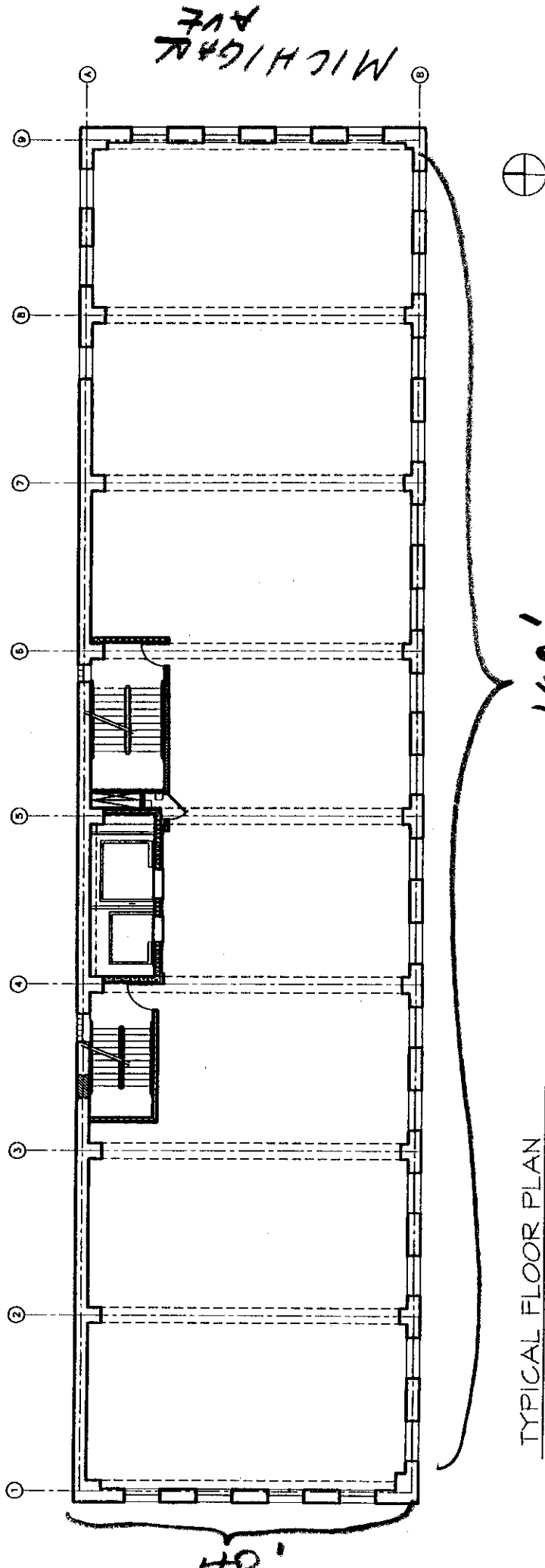
TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: NOT TO SCALE

North Street



Michigan Avenue



MICHIGAN AVE



160'

40'

TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: NOT TO SCALE

Open floor plan
 Crane Company Building
 836 (888) S. Michigan Avenue



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
SUITE 400 (OFFICES) or SUITE LL99 (ARCHIVES)
800 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20002

The Director of the National Park Service is sending you the following announcements and actions on properties for the National Register of Historic Places.

As you may be aware, the US Postal Service (USPS) is irradiating mail in selected USPS facilities, including our mail facility here in Washington D.C., to sterilize it from possible anthrax contamination using high-energy electron irradiation technology. We have concerns about the effects of irradiation on nominations to the National Register that pass through these facilities. We are advising you to avoid using USPS for envelopes and flats that contain National Register nominations, Determinations of Eligibility, and other correspondence. We strongly recommend using an alternate shipper such as United Parcel Service (UPS) or Federal Express (FedEx) for sending nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. Use only the address above.

For further information contact Edson Beall via voice 202/343-1572, fax 343-1836, or e-mail EdsonBeall@aol.com

WEEKLY LIST OF ACTIONS TAKEN ON PROPERTIES: 1/28/02 THROUGH 2/01/02

FEB 8 2002

KEY: State, County, Property Name, Address/Boundary, City, Vicinity, Reference Number, NHL, Action, Date, Multiple Name

ARIZONA, MARICOPA COUNTY, Windsor Square Historic District, Roughly bounded by 7th St., Camelback Rd., Central St., and Oregon Ave., Pheonix, 00001499, ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTATION APPROVED, 1/28/02
ARKANSAS, CLARK COUNTY, Arkadelphia Boy Scout Hut, 8th St., Arkadelphia, 01001526, LISTED, 1/28/02
ARKANSAS, HOT SPRING COUNTY, Rockport Cemetery, US 270, Rockport, 01001527, LISTED, 1/28/02
ARKANSAS, PERRY COUNTY, Hawks Schoolhouse, Co. Rd. 7, Ava vicinity, 01001528, LISTED, 1/28/02
CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES COUNTY, Hoover Hotel, 7035 Greenleaf Ave., Whittier, 02000074, LISTED, 2/01/02
CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO COUNTY, El Cortez Apartment Hotel, 702 Ash St., San Diego, 01001458, LISTED, 1/17/02
CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA COUNTY, Goleta Depot, 300 N. Los Carneros Rd., Goleta, 01001457, LISTED, 1/18/02
CONNECTICUT, HARTFORD COUNTY, Clark Farm Tenant House Site, Address Restricted, East Granby vicinity, 01001554, LISTED, 1/31/02
CONNECTICUT, NEW LONDON COUNTY, Slater Library and Fanning Annex, 26 Main St., Griswold, 01001529, LISTED, 1/28/02
CONNECTICUT, TOLLAND COUNTY, Captain Nathan Hale Monument, 120 Lake St., Coventry, 01001531, LISTED, 1/28/02
FLORIDA, NASSAU COUNTY, American Beach Historic District, Roughly bounded by Gregg, Lewis, Leonard, Main and James Sts., and Ocean Blvd., American Beach, 01001532, LISTED, 1/28/02
GEORGIA, DECATUR COUNTY, First African Missionary Baptist Church, 515 Webster St., Bainbridge, 01001535, LISTED, 1/28/02
GEORGIA, MERIWETHER COUNTY, Lone Oak Academy, 4945 Lone Oak Rd., Lone Oak vicinity, 01001536, LISTED, 1/28/02
GEORGIA, MERIWETHER COUNTY, Manchester Community Building, 105 E 2nd Ave., Manchester, 01001537, LISTED, 1/28/02
IDAHO, POWER COUNTY, American Falls Reservoir Flooded Townsite, American Falls Reservoir, American Falls vicinity, 01001480, LISTED, 1/28/02
ILLINOIS, COOK COUNTY, Crane Company Building, 836 S Michigan Ave., Chicago, 01001538, LISTED, 1/28/02
IOWA, DUBUQUE COUNTY, Dubuque YMCA Building, 125 W 9th St., Dubuque, 01001541, LISTED, 1/31/02
KANSAS, ATCHISON COUNTY, Earhart, Amelia, Historic District, 115-125, 200-227, 302-315, 318, 324 2nd St, 203-305 North Ter, 124, 200, 300 3rd St, and 205, 112 and 224 Santa Fe St., Atchison, 01001543, LISTED, 2/01/02
KANSAS, COWLEY COUNTY, St. John's Lutheran College Girls Dormitory, 6th Ave and Gary St., Winfield, 01001544, LISTED, 1/28/02
NEVADA, CHURCHILL COUNTY, Hazen Store, 600 Reno Highway, Hazen, 01001547, LISTED, 1/28/02
OHIO, GEauga COUNTY, Fowler's Mills Historic District, 10743-10779, 10750 Mayfield Rd.; 12426-12533 Fowlers Mill Rd., Chardon vicinity, 01001522, LISTED, 1/29/02
SOUTH CAROLINA, AIKEN COUNTY, Zubly Cemetery, Forrest Dr., Beech Island, 01001548, LISTED, 1/28/02
SOUTH CAROLINA, FLORENCE COUNTY, Gregg--Wallace Farm Tenant House, 310 Price Rd., Mars Bluff vicinity, 01001550, LISTED, 1/28/02
SOUTH DAKOTA, BUTTE COUNTY, Ditchrider House, N of US 212, Nisland, 01000172, LISTED, 1/31/02
TENNESSEE, PUTNAM COUNTY, Broad Street Church of Christ, 157 W. Broad St., Cookeville, 01001567, LISTED, 2/01/02
WISCONSIN, DANE COUNTY, Wisconsin Heights Battlefield, .4 mi SE of Jcto of Co. Rd. Y and WI 78., Sauk City vicinity, 01001553, LISTED, 1/30/02